



Saddletail snapper | *Lutjanus malabaricus*

A Snapshot of the **Finfish Trawl Fishery**

Area

The fishery operates in a defined area of the Arafura Sea and the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Licences

There is currently 1 licence in the fishery and that is fully transferable.

Gear

The single operator currently uses a semi-demersal net specifically designed to minimise habitat disturbance while maintaining viable levels of catch. The use of high aspect trawl boards reduces bottom contact by as much as 80% when compared to traditional otter boards used for fish trawling in the past.

With assistance from Fisheries, an exclusion device to eliminate turtles, sharks and rays has been developed and is planned to become a self imposed permanent requirement for the fishery in the near future.

Catch

The fishery currently targets Saddletail snapper and Scarlet snapper together with other major species Painted sweetlip, Red spot emperor, Moses snapper and Goldband snapper.

Product Form

Whole fresh and frozen.

Markets

The catch is sold Australia wide and internationally.

Season

There is no closed season for the finfish fishery.

Management

The fishery is managed under Northern Territory legislation by the Northern Territory Government on behalf of a Joint Authority comprising the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments.

General

The area of the fishery was fished by Taiwanese and Thai fishing vessels in the 1980's, until the Australian and Northern Territory Governments encouraged Australian fishers to fish within the same area. Traditional Thai fishing methods resulted in seabed damage.

Several million dollars is invested in the present operation in the fishery.

Supported by:



Northern Territory Government